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The specification has been amended to correct an error noted by the Examiner. No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claims 1 to 10 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over “Townsend” (U.S. Patent No. 4,700,726). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As the Examiner correctly notes, Townsend discloses *four segments*. As the Examiner also apparently admits, the first and second sections of Townsend are not disclosed or suggested as being of different longitudinal lengths. Actually, the figures of Townsend would clearly suggest that the first and second sections of Townsend *are equal* longitudinal lengths

With respect to Claim 1 of the invention, the first longitudinal length and the second longitudinal length are different. The Examiner essentially admits that the lengths of Townsend are the same and argues that “or at least it would have been obvious that the longitudinal length of the first segment be greater than the longitudinal length of the second segment in situations where the length percentages of the range are greater for the first segment”.

There is, however, *no disclosure in Townsend* that the length percentages are greater in the first segment.

Furthermore, not only does the Examiner make no reference to any disclosure in Townsend that supports the first and second lengths being different, the Examiner *gives no reason why* one of ordinary skill in the art *would modify* the first and second lengths of Townsend to be different, and especially in view of the figures showing the lengths to be the same, it is the applicants’ view that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been made on this point alone.

Moreover, Claim 2 sets forth a feature wherein the first and second ends have different densities. Here again, there is no disclosure in Townsend that the first and second sections have different densities. Actually, Townsend would appear to suggest that they are the same, as the first and second ends are nearly always referred to together when they are described as the “loose ends” or the “dense ends”. The Examiner has given no reason why one of ordinary skill in the

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art would modify Townsend to have first and second ends with different densities.

With respect to claims 5 and 8 of the invention, again as in claim 1, the first longitudinal length and the second longitudinal length are different. The Examiner essentially admits that the lengths of Townsend are the same and argues that "or at least it would have been obvious that the longitudinal length of the first segment be greater than the longitudinal length of the second segment in situations where the length percentages of the range are greater for the first segment".

The Examiner makes no reference to any disclosure in Townsend that supports the first and second lengths being different lengths and *gives no reason why* one of ordinary skill in the art *would modify* the first and second lengths of Townsend to be different.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections have been overcome and that the claims are in condition for allowance. Such allowance is earnestly solicited.

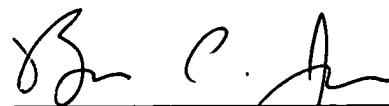
In the event there are any questions relating to this Amendment or to the application in general, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would telephone the undersigned attorney.

Please charge any shortage or credit any overpayment of fees to BLANK ROME COMISKY & MCCAULEY LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185 (000064-00139).

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: September 16, 2002

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 4 of the specification as follows:

This application is a division of application Serial No. 09/452,413 filed on December 1, 1999, now U.S. Patent No. 6,360,751 [_____].